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From Empire and Intervention to Freedom and Republic

by Jacob G. Hornberger

The following is a transcript of a speech given at The Future of Freedom Foundation's June 2008 conference, "Restoring the Republic: Foreign Policy & Civil Liberties" held in Reston, Virginia.

Jacob Hornberger: I'd like to formally welcome everyone to an exciting conference, Restoring the Republic 2008: Foreign Policy and Civil Liberties. I know there's a lot of friendly faces in the audience, repeaters from our conference last year. We call you slow learners. <laughter> Nice to have you here. I'm Jacob Hornberger. I'm president of the Future of Freedom Foundation. As many of you know, FFF is a non-profit educational foundation. Our mission since our inception in 1989 has been to present an uncompromising moral, philosophical, and economic case for the free society. If one must put a label on what we are, we are pure libertarians at the Future of Freedom Foundation. The philosophy of this conference-- and the reason we decided to have a follow-up conference on the same subject, as everyone here knows-- is that these are the two burning issues of our time: foreign policy and civil liberties. It's impossible to achieve a free society, and this is what many advocates of liberty do not understand: it is impossible to achieve a free society without addressing what is going on with respect to foreign policy and civil liberties and putting our nation on the right track with respect to these two subjects.

We've got an all-star lineup. In all my years since I discovered libertarianism 30 years ago, I have never seen a greater all-star lineup of speakers ever at a conference. To tell you how things are going to be operating, the introductions to the speakers are going to be extremely short so that they can have the maximum amount of the one hour allotted to them. If you'd like to check out their longer bios, they're in your packets or you can go online.

The schedule will be extremely tight. We're going to be running on time, just like we did last year. During the Q&A session, of course, we have the microphone set up here in the middle, and that's the way that will be handled; but keep in mind, please stay on time. The evening sessions will be in different rooms. Arrive a little bit early because we don't really know where the rooms are, so you might have to look around a little bit for the dinner rooms. We got display tables from some of the other libertarian, free market organizations. Feel free to take their samples. We've got books for sale at the registration desk. We've got DVDs and CDs for sale from last year's conference where the speeches were absolutely awesome.

Tonight, Ron Paul, assuming everything goes well with a vote that's scheduled in Congress, is planning to be here between 4:00 and 5:00 to autograph books, copies of his book. He goes on at 5:00. We have C-SPAN coming for the evening session. They'll be covering Ron Paul as well as Stephen Kinzer and Andrew Bacevich, so that's going to be rather exciting.

I'd also like to introduce you to our staff members. We're committed to making this the most enjoyable weekend of your life, at least intellectually speaking, and I want you to know all the staff members. Stephanie, would you raise your hand there? Stephanie is our events coordinator. <Applause> Alicia Cannon is our operations manager at FFF. <Applause> Bart Frazier is our program director. <Applause> And we've got ten student interns that are here to serve you and make your stay as enjoyable as possible, and, on their name tags, they're identified as interns.

I'll explain to you a little bit about our sponsors and our sponsorships. You'll notice that the front rows are reserved for our sponsors, and that's the way it's going to be at the meals, too. And just so you understand what that's about, your registration fee essentially covers the cost of the meals and that's it. That's how much the hotel is charging us, so we don't make any money on the registration fees at all. We just transfer it to the hotel to cover the cost of the meals. So how does the rest of the conference get funded, the speakers, the travel, the hotel, the hotel expenses, and so forth? Well, that's where our sponsors come in. And so, as a way to say thank you to our sponsors, we set aside the reserve areas so that everybody else will understand what's going on with that. If you'd like to become a sponsor, there's still time to do that. Just see Alicia. We'd love to have your support.

I know there's a lot of contributors here to the Future of Freedom Foundation. I want to thank you very much for your support over the years. You know, we're a small organization, but we like to think we pack a wallop, and it's because of the contributions that you've made to us over the years that we've been able to do that, and we're very, very grateful for you helping us to continue the work that we do and to have a conference like this, and we hope to do these in the future. So welcome. We're committed to

making this, again, the most enjoyable weekend. You let us know if there's anything we can do. Contact me, Bart, Alicia, Stephanie, any of the interns.

The year 1989 was one of great celebration, for that was the year in which that hated and reviled symbol of empire, oppression, tyranny, injustice came crashing down. And it wasn't just the people of Germany and the people of Eastern Europe who were celebrating the demise of the Berlin Wall and the freedom from domination of the Soviet Empire, it was also people all over the world, including the American people. And it was especially a time of hope and optimism for Americans because Americans had this sense that, for the first time since World War II, they might actually have the chance to live in an era that was free from the threat of perpetual war, of militarism, the garrison state, the warfare state, the massive military industrial complex, ever-growing military expenditures, and, of course, the enormous amount of taxation needed to fund the Cold War expenditures.

Here we are, almost 20 years later, and we find ourselves, once again, living in an era in which there is the constant threat of perpetual war. We live in a country in which the President has the unrestrained power to attack any country on earth, including countries that have not even threatened the United States with attack, and without even the semblance of the constitutionally required congressional declaration of war. We live in a country where the President's subordinates, the CIA, can go into any country in the world and kidnap any foreign citizen with immunity and impunity and whisk those citizens, disappear them into secret prison camps, perhaps forever, or even worse, rendition them to a foreign, brutal regime, an allied regime such as Syria, regimes that they even deny talking to, even though they somehow or other make the prearrangements to have those regimes torture on their behalf.

We live in a country where militarism is the order of the day, where Washington officials walk around with an air of self-importance and pomposity that would probably have even embarrassed officials in the Roman Empire; a country in which there are military troops stationed in more than 100 countries around the world; in which they have posts and bases in almost all 50 states; in which the military now has the authority to sweep into neighborhoods and communities here in the United States and arrest whomever they want, simply by labeling him an enemy combatant in the so-called war on terrorism, and cart him away to a military prison camp anywhere in the world and treat him accordingly: torture, sex abuse, water boarding, beatings, indefinite incarceration, maybe even execution, after a trial, of course, before a military tribunal, a kangaroo tribunal whose officials are answerable to their superiors in the Pentagon and the President.

How did it come to this? How did this happen? How could we go from a period of such great hope and optimism, from the so-called peace dividend, to a situation that is actually worse, insofar as

liberty is concerned, than it was during the entire Cold War? And equally important, how do we get out of this mess? 9/11. Immediately after the 9/11 attacks, President Bush made a dramatic and important announcement. That announcement related to motivation, the motivation of those who had committed the attacks. The President told the country that what motivated these terrorists was their hatred for America's freedom and values. It was an interpretation of motivation to which all Americans were immediately expected to subscribe. Immediately the mantra was picked up by people in the State Department, the Pentagon, those in the neocon community, the conservative element, the liberal element, even some libertarians picked up the mantra.

The reason why it was so important for the President to do that and so quickly was that the last thing U.S. officials wanted was for the American people to take a close, critical look at U.S. foreign policy, and specifically what U.S. officials had been doing since the fall of that Berlin Wall. Not only in the Middle East but also in places like Latin America, the Pentagon, in desperate search for a mission after the fall of the Berlin Wall, and desperately trying to convince the Americans why they did not need this peace dividend, why they should keep this military industrial complex continuing and ongoing, had ratcheted up the war on drugs in Latin America, supporting brutal regimes, and of course we're seeing the fruits of that now in terms of an increased drug war, terrorist attacks on our Southern border, which are almost certain to spill over, at some point or other, onto our side of the border.

In the Middle East, for example, there were the cruel and brutal sanctions against the Iraqi people. Now, it's difficult to arrive at an extremely accurate estimate of the number of Iraqi children that were killed by these sanctions. The best estimates are 300,000, 400,000. Madeleine Albright, who was a high U.S. official, had the authority to speak on behalf of the U.S. government, to announce the principles and policies of the U.S. government. She was the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. She was asked by "60 Minutes" whether the deaths of half a million Iraqi children had been worth it. She answered, "Well, it's a hard issue but, yes, those deaths are worth it."

It was a statement that Americans were, by and large, indifferent to, given the predisposition of the American people to leave foreign policy to the experts in Washington, much as they leave the operation of the economy to those experts in Washington, but I'll guarantee you it was a statement that reverberated throughout the Middle East. What in the world could justify the deaths of hundreds of thousands, a half a million children, Iraqi or any other nationality? Well, to understand this, it's necessary to put those sanctions into context. How they came into existence, what their purpose was, why U.S. officials considered them so important.

For that, we go back to 1991 during the Persian Gulf intervention, an intervention in which U.S. officials had turned on their former partner and ally, Saddam Hussein, a person that they had supported during the 1980s. In the midst of that conflict, the Pentagon did a secret study trying to determine what would happen if they knowingly and intentionally dropped bombs and destroyed the water and sewage facilities in Iraq. And they concluded the same thing that U.S. officials would later conclude with respect to Hurricane Katrina. You'll recall that U.S. officials were telling people "Don't drink the water" after Hurricane Katrina because you can get sick and you can even die. That's the same thing that Pentagon officials concluded about bombing these water and sewage facilities in Iraq, whereupon, having reached that conclusion, they proceeded to order the destruction of those water and sewage facilities through the bombing of them.

At the termination of the conflict, they continued enforcing the most brutal regime of sanctions that one can ever imagine. It's not like this brutal embargo that they've had against Cuba for some 45 years, which is really a control on the American people. They put Americans in jail who travel and trade with the Cuban people. But the Cubans at least could continue trading with people, Europe, Asia, and so forth. Here, we had a virtually total embargo, no sale of oil by the Iraqi government and the boarding of every ship and the rejection of every ship that contained any type of equipment that could repair these water and sewage facilities. And their prediction turned out to be right: infectious illnesses, diseases, especially among the young, the newborn, the toddlers, the children.

And, throughout this time, week after week, month after month, because these sanctions lasted 11 years, and year after year, as these children were dying, there was a cauldron of anger that was starting to boil in the Middle East, not only among the parents who were losing their children, but among their countrymen, their friends, their neighbors, their relatives, fellow Muslims, fellow Arabs who knew that there was no way to break the stranglehold of these sanctions. There was a sense of helplessness and desperation and anger that was boiling. Two high U.N. officials, Hans Von Sponeck and Denis Halliday, resigned their positions in protest of what they called this genocide. They said, "We cannot participate in this any longer," and they resigned.

To add to the anger, U.S. officials threw in a bit of humiliation by stationing a large contingent of U.S. forces on the holiest lands in the Muslim religion, Mecca and Medina. To add to the helplessness and the desperation, to that sense of those things, U.S. officials established the no-fly zones over Iraq. No consent of Congress, no consent of the United Nations; the President simply unilaterally set up those no-fly zones, which provided them the excuse to continue firing missiles and dropping bombs on the Iraqi people.

I'll never forget reading an article about a 13-year-old boy during this period of time of the no-fly zones that was tending his sheep, and he had his head blown totally off his body by one of those smart missiles that turned out to be not too smart. Here was the anger, boiling, boiling, boiling until it finally erupted. U.S. officials said, "They struck us because they hate our freedom and values." We're shocked, we're surprised, we had no idea. But, you see, some of us did have an idea of what was coming.

If you look at articles that we were publishing on our website at the Future of Freedom Foundation, they're online, 1999, 2000, especially those by Sheldon Richman, we were saying that if you don't stop these policies, you're going to see terrorist attacks on American soil, what Chalmers Johnson calls blowback, what the CIA called blowback.

In fact, Chalmers Johnson was saying the same thing. He is the man that's written this tremendous trilogy of books on foreign policy, *Blowback*, *The Sorrows of Empire*, and *Nemesis*. In his book *Blowback*, published before 9/11, he was saying, if you don't stop these policies, you're going to suffer the blowback because that's what's going to motivate them. What's going to motivate them is anger and the seeking of vengeance. We weren't surprised when it finally happened.

Now, what was the purpose of these sanctions? What did Madeleine Albright mean by "it" when she said, "The deaths of half a million Iraqi children are worth it"? What does she mean by that? Well, that raises the issue of regime change, which is the core essence of U.S. foreign policy. How do you get people that are pro-U.S. government into positions of power around the world in foreign countries? It's the same way they do domestically. You know how they try to get their people in public office and the governorships and the state legislatures and so forth? That's what they're doing overseas. That's the essence of foreign policy. Intervening in the foreign affairs of other countries. Politicking over there. Foreign aid. Buying people off. Coups. Assassination. Murders. Invasions. Sanctions. Embargos. In order to guarantee a ruler who will be a member of the coalition of the willing when he's needed, when one needs a vote in the United Nations and so forth. That's what those deaths of half a million children were all about. The attempt to get rid of Saddam Hussein in order to install somebody who would do the bidding of the U.S. government.

Iran, 1953. In that year, a man named Mohammad Mosaddeq was elected to power. Democratically elected. He was a prime minister. Been elected by the parliament of Iran. Here was the foundation of democracy in Iran. This was a man who was highly respected by the Iranian people, beloved by them, *Time Magazine's* Man of the Year, 1953. He commits the crime of nationalizing Iranian oil. Okay. As a libertarian, I could never support such a thing, but I also would never support foreign intervention to fix the problem. The way that I figure it is, you go overseas as an oil company or a big

business or a tourist, you take your risks. And if you don't want to take those risks, then don't travel overseas. But don't look to your federal daddy to come and bail you out when things go wrong.

And that's what the British oil companies who had lost their concessions in this nationalization did. They ran to the CIA. The CIA secretly and surreptitiously enters Iran, instigates a coup that ousts Mosaddeq from power, and reinstalls the brutal dictatorship of the Shah of Iran. The Shah proceeds to inflict a reign of terror on his own people to maintain control on power that involves torture chambers, terror, fully supported by the CIA. They didn't care what he did to his own people as long as they had their man doing their bidding and furnishing them the oil. The irony of this is that, after that regime change, 1979, 25 years later, the Iranian people revolt against this brutal dictatorship and they take U.S. diplomats hostage in the embassies.

And you know what the reaction of U.S. officials was? Same thing as it was after 9/11. We are innocent. We're innocent. We're a good government, we're a caring government, we're a compassionate government, we give food to people around the world. Woe is us. They just hate us for our freedom and values, these Iranian terrorists. The average American bought it because, again, his predisposition is to see foreign policy, like the economy, as too complicated. I got to leave it to my experts in Washington.

But the Iranian people, they knew the source of their anger because, by this time, they had figured out what the CIA had done to their democratic system and how the CIA had destroyed it. And the blowback of it all was, as a result of that revolution, they didn't establish the democratic system that the CIA had overthrown, they established this extremist Islamist theocracy.

One year later, 1954, Guatemala. The CIA, feeling the success, because this was a success for them, man, this is real power, you know? Ousting people from office, putting your man in. They go into Guatemala and they do the same thing. They oust the democratically elected president of Guatemala, a man named Jacobo Arbenz Guzman. Now, Arbenz was a socialist, which meant that he really reflected the philosophy of Franklin Roosevelt. <laughter> It's what he was doing, what Arbenz's crime was, he was taking land that belonged to a U.S. corporation named United Fruit, land that wasn't being farmed, and he was giving it to the poor people.

Again, as a libertarian, I'd never support such a thing, but how is that different from the socialist philosophy of Republicans and Democrats? I mean, is that not what the income tax is all about? Is that not what the estate tax is all about? Taking from the rich and giving to the poor? This is what Arbenz was doing. That wasn't his crime. His crime was he was jacking with a U.S. corporation that had contributed money, surprise, surprise, to members of Congress. They used their influence to get the CIA into

Guatemala. They instigate a coup, again secretly, that ousts Arbenz from power, democratically elected, and they install a brutal military general.

Now, there's something about Washington officials that-- there's something that they love about generals. I mean, that's why they're supporting, for example, Pervez Musharraf in Pakistan. I mean, while they're killing people in Iraq for the sake of democracy, they tell us, at the very same time, they're supporting this unelected brutal military general in Pakistan who's not only suspending members of the Supreme Court, he's putting them in jail. He's jailing lawyers and U.S. officials are supporting him. They were doing the same thing in Latin America. They installed a general in Guatemala, they've supported his brutal regimes that are headed by generals. Why? Because they have this concept that generals establish order and stability. That's why they were supporting Pinochet, you know: order and stability because democracy's messy, it's unpredictable. You might come up with a Roosevelt or an Arbenz in power.

Well, in Guatemala, they instigate what is essentially a three-decade-long civil war. It ends up killing about a million Guatemalans, and in this entire process, they're supporting these generals, this brutal succession of regimes in Guatemala that are torturing people, killing people, a reign of terror, the likes of which-- they're training the troops at the School of the Americas and other U.S. installations. They've got torture manuals at the School of the Americas. These troops are returning to Guatemala where they're raping people and torturing people. Three decades of this. By their fruits you will know them. This is the essence of U.S. foreign policy.

That's what the attacks on Castro were all about. Soon as Castro took power, it was clear that he was not going to do the bidding of U.S. officials, and U.S. officials, who have this obsessive need to control Cuba that stretches back to the Spanish-American War in 1898, immediately engaged in a regime change operation. You know, assassination attempts, coups, Bay of Pigs, and so forth. This is what the sanctions were about in Iraq. Now, they sprinkle little messages of, oh, well, this is about Saddam not disarming. Oh, if only he'll disarm. But no matter what Saddam did, he let in all the inspectors. He kept telling them, "I've destroyed these weapons of mass destruction." It didn't matter. U.S. officials sent out the message: once you get rid of Saddam, whether it's a coup or however way you do it, we'll lift the sanctions.

How did they know? Why were they so convinced that they would find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq? They had the receipts. They had the receipts. This is what Americans don't want to face: that when there was that partnership between Saddam Hussein and U.S. officials in the 1980s, it was the United States and other western countries that were furnishing those biological weapons, those chemical weapons. They figured that he would still have some left over. And why had they furnished him these weapons? Because these experts in Washington wanted to help him kill Iranians in the Iraq/Iran

war. And they wanted to help him kill Iranians because Iranians were now our enemies because they had had the audacity to revolt and oust our dictator, and when we had our dictator, they were our friends.

And this is the essence of U.S. foreign policy and this is what Americans don't want to face and this is why they didn't want you to have that critical examination of U.S. foreign policy after 9/11. And that, of course, raises the issue of patriotism. You know, this notion that patriotism involves blind support of your government when it goes to war, and of course we got so many wars going on, the war on drugs, the war on poverty, the war on illiteracy, the war on terrorism, the war on Iraq, the war on Afghanistan, perpetual war everywhere, and you're supposed to-- the status collectivist notion of patriotism that says, "By golly, you support what they're doing, you support what they're saying, you rally to the government."

And those of us that said, "Uh-uh, not if your government's doing something wrong." We got hit with a cascade of accusations: "You traitors." You wouldn't believe, after the invasion of Iraq, the number of e-mails that were flooding into our in boxes at the Future of Freedom Foundation. "You hate America." "You hate everything this country stands for." "We got to be tough." That was one of the favorite ones, "We got to be tough," and every time I'd get one of those, I'd say, "Well, who exactly is this 'we'?" If "we" got to be tough, what are you doing in this country? Why are you not over there? "Oh, I'm too old." "Well, I already served my time." "I got to sit back at the home front and protect the women and the children." <laughter>

But it was this status collectivist notion. It was the notion of we are the government. We're all in this together. One lady told me, it was really amusing, at a speech I was giving one time, she says, "Thank goodness that the Bill of Rights protects us from the terrorists." And she was referring to Al Qaeda. <laughter> And I said to her, I said, "Ma'am, the Bill of Rights protects us from what is the biggest threat to our freedom and that's the federal government." And she was just shocked because, in her mind, we are the federal government. It's all one great big one entity, and I said, "Go and read the Bill of Rights. Our Founding Fathers, our ancestors, understood that the biggest threat to our freedom and our well-being is not the terrorists, not the communists, not the foreigners, not anybody, it's right there in Washington."

And that means that there's two entities. There's the private sector and there's the federal sector. 1776, you go into a public school, probably most private schools, too, and you tell a group of students, "Those people that signed the Declaration of Independence, they were not great Americans." And, man, they'll go ballistic. They just won't believe you. And you say, "No, no, no, they were not great Americans." And the fact is they weren't great Americans. They were Englishmen. They were as English citizens as you are Americans. If they had passports at the time, they'd be carrying a British passport. That's the real essence of the American Revolution. You had people taking a stand against their own government. We

forget that on the 4th of July. Because their government was in the wrong and the reason we consider them patriots is because they had the courage to take a stand against the wrongdoing of their own government. <Applause>

You want to ever drive a neocon batty, or should I say battier, <laughter> bring up the story of the White Rose in Nazi Germany, because, you see, the Germans, in World War II, take the same position on patriotism as the neocons do. I mean, you know, some people take the position, conservatives and liberals, my government, right or wrong, okay? Once a war starts, no questions asked. Got to rally to the government. No questions asked. The neocons are much worse than this. Their concept is, my government never wrong. Because they look at the federal government as a god, you know, and you criticize the federal government, it's like blasphemy in these people's minds. Well, that's the exact same concept of patriotism that the German people took in World War II. That, once the shooting started, it didn't matter who had attacked whom, that's irrelevant, that we've got to rally, we got to support the government, we got to support the troops, we're at war now against the-- everybody rally to the government. That was their concept, the neocon concept of patriotism.

There's a group of students at the University of Munich, and around 1943, they say, "Wait a minute. The real job of a citizen is to take a critical look at what his government's doing and, if his government's in the wrong, to take a stand against it, even or especially during war, when the stakes are so much higher." And it was a group called the White Rose. It was led by a brother and sister who were in college, Hans and Sophie Scholl, so they started secretly publishing a bunch of pamphlets that said, "Look, as Germans, we have to stand for our country." So they drew this distinction between the country and the government. "We got to stand for what Germany stands for, the principles, the values of what Germany has always stood for, which means we got to stand up against this regime." They even took it a step further and said, "We can't even support the troops. How do we support the troops when the troops are the enforcement vehicle by which the wrongdoing is being carried out?" They said, "Look, this government is not only aggressive against other countries that haven't attacked Germany. This is a country that's killing innocent people, Jews." These students were not Jewish. They were German students and the White Rose. But they were talking about the Jews that were being killed by their own government.

Well, they were caught and they knew the risks. They weren't naïve. They were caught by the Gestapo and they were brought to trial very quickly in a secret tribunal, a tribunal whose judge answered to his boss, Hitler. And at the tribunal, their family, their parents were not permitted to attend. Their parents tried to get in and the guards would not permit them to attend the proceedings where they had a sham of a defense attorney who was scared to death that the officials would do something bad against him. The judge railed against them, "What bad students you are, what bad children you are. As Germans,

you should be rallying to the government." That's what the patriot does in times of war. And Hans and Sophie Scholl didn't bat an eye. They simply said back to that judge, "As Germans, we stand for what's right, even if that means standing against you and the rest of your cohorts in this government," and they were found guilty and they were beheaded within a few hours. It is the most remarkable story of courage I think I've ever encountered. They were standing for what's right and they drew a distinction between the country and their government.

Look what these people have brought us with this interventionist foreign policy, this pro-empire foreign policy. Out of control federal spending, a dollar that's crashing in international markets, prices of commodities rising across the board, not just gasoline prices, grocery store prices, restaurant, everything rising across, standard of living rising, the price for this interventionism and empire is now being paid by the American people, especially through a crashing dollar. You got militarism as the order of the day. You got the NSA spying on Americans, monitoring their e-mails without warrants, their telephone calls, turning private sector people into informants and spies that would make even the Soviets proud. This is not what America is all about but, you see, there's good news in this is that there's a cause of it. There's a readily recognizable cause for all this, which means that there's a way out. There's a way out of all this.

Number one, we've got to dismantle this military empire. There's no other way. If you want to achieve a free society, there is no way you're going to be able to do so by keeping what conservatives call a strong national defense, which is a euphemism for troops in 100 countries. <Applause> Those libertarians that are out funding libertarian groups and saying I'm battling for freedom, I'm battling for freedom, that are at the same time supporting all this war on terrorism and this interventionism, they're wasting their time because there's no way. Because, you see, here is the scam. It's one of the greatest scams in history. You have all this interventionism overseas, embargos, sanctions, invasions. You see, when they said, "9/11 changed the world, 9/11 changed the world," are you kidding me? It didn't change anything. It simply continued the same foreign policy that had been going on before.

U.S. officials say, "Wow, the sanctions didn't get rid of Saddam," but now the people are so scared, whenever we mention the words "the terrorists," we can do anything we want. So they invade Iraq to accomplish what the sanctions did not accomplish. They oust him from power. Their hope was to put in a puppet, and, of course, it's boomeranged because what happened was they got an extremist Islamic regime that has already aligned itself with Iran. But it's a perfect scam because then they use that as the excuse. And, if there's another terrorist attack from some angry Iraqi who's lost his family members, because they've killed an estimated one million more on top of the 300,000 or 400,000 children, they're going to say the same thing. "It's hatred for America's freedom and values. You see, this proves that we have a terrorist threat."

And there's going to be Patriot Act II and III and IV. And there's going to be Military Commissions Act 11, 12, and 13. There's going to be more massive spying by the NSA. They're going to ratchet up the assaults on civil liberties, and they're going to continue their interventionism that then produces more terrorist threats that then produces more assaults on civil liberties until there's a total Soviet-style police state. And so the only way out of this is to return to first principles, and those principles were the principles of our Founding Fathers, who hated empires and they revolted against an empire. That was why they favored a republic, a limited government republic. The thought that there's American troops in more than 100 countries as part of this world's sole remaining empire would have been an anathema to our Founding Fathers.

But even that's not enough. Why are there posts and bases in almost 50 states of the union? What do you need all these military bases domestically for? There is absolutely no danger of an invasion by some foreign power of this country. None. The situation is the same as it was in 1989. Oh, there are some threats of terrorist attacks in blowback to U.S. foreign policy. At the worst, you may have a few hundred or a few thousand people killed, but the thought, these catastrophic thoughts that people come up with, the neocons of oh, the terrorists are coming, they're going to take over our country, they're going to run the IRS and the public schools, and they're going to run the toll booths on the interstate highways is just nonsense. No country has the military capability to board thousands, tens of thousands of ships, cross the oceans, and invade and conquer the United States. It's a ridiculous catastrophic paranoid thought.

Now is the time to take this peace dividend, dismantle the empire, and restore a republic, a limited government republic. So we're talking about what conservatives call limited government but have never been able to apply in foreign affairs, and we limit the power of the federal government in overseas affairs. No more invasions, coups, assassinations, no more getting involved in the politics of other countries. Leave those other countries free to establish their own politics.

Number two, dismantle all the embargos, the sanctions, including those against Cuba, the trade restrictions, liberate the American people, the private sector, the other entity, unlimited freedom for the American people to trade and interact with the people of the world. Go into Cuba, spend money, talk to Cuban people, interact with them, talk to them about what freedom of speech means. Eliminate this isolationism of the private sector in this country. So we rein in the government, we isolate the government, we liberate the American people. Who are our best diplomats? You talk to people overseas. <Applause> You talk to people overseas and they're able to draw this distinction between the federal government and the American people.

I've seen this. I was visiting Cuba and I asked a taxi driver there, I said, "How is it that the Cuban people are so nice to me?" And they are. The Cuban people are the nicest people I've ever encountered, just generally speaking, very genuine, they're very sincere, and I said, "After what our government has done to you all with this embargo?" He said to me, "Why should we treat you bad because of what your government has done to us?" And that's pretty much the reasoning that foreigners have. They say, "We hate your government. We hate what your government does, its policies, but we love the American people. We love your values, we love your traditions, we love what you stand for." And so what we've got to do is liberate the private sector, the cultural groups, the tourists, the businessmen, to travel and trade with people in the world.

Number three, we've got to end this evil, immoral, and destructive deadly war on drugs. <Applause> This is the new front that the Pentagon and the CIA are using. You know, just in case, as a backstop in case the terrorist threat from the blowback of Middle East policies ever comes to an end. You see what's going on in Latin America? This is the drug war. All these killings of government officials, in Mexico, the terrorist attacks, inevitably they're going to spill over, and if there's an attack on a DEA center along the border, you're going to see all the same assaults on civil liberties that you've seen in the war on terror. It's time to end that war.

Now, so there's a way out of this. It's not one that makes Americans comfortable because they're so enamored of the idea of big government, big empire, sole remaining empire in the world, super power, that it's very difficult for them to think in terms of a limited government republic, the type of society our Founding Fathers called for, individual freedom, free markets, no standing military force, no militarism, no empire. And that's what this conference is all about.

Now, there's a lot of people that could be speaking at this conference. It's a relatively small band of people that are battling for civil liberties, battling for the principles of the Bill of Rights, battling against these kangaroo tribunals in Guantanamo Bay. Saying that this is not what America stands for. Battling against interventionism in foreign policies. A lot of people could have been speaking at this conference. Many of you that are in this audience that are not lined up as speakers could be speaking. We had a limited amount of time.

But let me tell you something about these speakers, as well as the people in this movement, conservatives, liberals, and libertarians: they're battling to restore the principles of liberty on which this country was founded. These are the vanguard of the people that are fighting hard to restore the founding principles of this country. These are your Sakharovs, these are your Solzhenitsyns. These are your dissidents that are devoting their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to the dismantling of this

wall, this federal government wall. And how are they doing that and how are we going to accomplish this task? Through the dissemination of ideas.

What we're doing at this conference and what you do with your friends and neighbors and people across this country, you share ideas. They kept telling those dissidents behind that Berlin Wall, "You don't have a chance. The Soviet empire is too powerful. Has all the guns." And they just kept talking about liberty. They talked about Mises and Hayek and Friedman and ideas on liberty and they kept disseminating them until those ideas brought down that wall peacefully. And the exact same thing can happen here. That's why they're so scared by that Ron Paul revolution, because they see that ideas on liberty are going from person to person to person and people are breaking through and they're saying, "Oh, I see what you guys have been saying all these years about foreign policy and what the government's been doing to people overseas and what a real patriotism is all about, it's standing for what's right. I understand what you're talking about, the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence."

And once they achieve that breakthrough, there's no turning back, and that's what scares the neocons and the establishment, the mainstream journalists, and the rest of those statists. They're scared to death that there's going to be a rebirth of liberty that's going to ignite the hearts and minds of the people of this country. If we stick with our principles, if we continue sharing these ideas with our friends and neighbors and family, I have absolutely no doubts that it is the destiny of the American people to break free of this darkness and lead the world into the light, lead the world into the highest reaches of freedom that mankind has ever seen. Thank you very much. <Applause> Thank you. Thank you very much. Wonderful to preach to the choir. <laughter>

Audience member: Thank you for that great opening. I hope the rest of the conference is as stirring, but I have one question. Hopefully I can just ask it once and not have to ask everyone. As one of the few locals here, I spend a lot of time at these sorts of things, at the ACLU, at Cato, and I often come away frustrated because I am much better informed but I don't know what to do. I could not leave this room right now and into the military industrial complex, so I'd like to ask you and any of the other speakers, if you could, what are the concrete steps we could do to make a change? Now, right now, we're stuck between voting for the right-wing collectivists or the left-wing collectivists or casting a protest vote for Ron Paul or Bob Barr. What else is there we can do?

Jacob Hornberger: Yeah, I've been hit with that question for I guess 20 some odd years I've been in a libertarian movement. I wish I could come up with a good answer because then I could start, you know, copyrighting it and sell it. My feeling is this. This is the way I finally come out on this thing, is that there is no central plan for freedom. Nobody's going to be able to come up with a perfect plan on how do

we achieve it. The way I answer that question, if anybody asks me, is I say, look, the best thing you can ever do is what Leonard Read, the founder of the Foundation for Economic Education, said, is work on yourself. Do what you're doing. You go to these conferences, you educate yourself, and the idea is that that makes you a better advocate of these principles.

Now, what do you do then when you become a better advocate of these principles? That's something that each person has to figure out for himself because you know what you're interested in. You know what your talents are, your abilities. I don't know. I can't tell you this is what you should do. You've got to figure that out. That could be running for public office, that could be writing letters to the editor, I mean, I know a guy that writes so many letters to the editor, most of them are never published but he hits every so often. It could be supporting candidates, supporting think tanks, educational foundations. It could be things that I'm not even listing here that I haven't even thought of.

Most important, it involves the dissemination of the ideas to which you're subscribing, and this is what a lot of people don't understand. There's a power of ideas that we can't measure. That once-- all you got to do is inject them into the marketplace, which means sharing them with someone else. That could be a family member. You know, you may get ostracized at Thanksgiving dinner or something, you know, like we all do by family members when we talk about these things, but by sharing those ideas, you plant the seed in their minds of, hey, this is what... Now, I'm not saying be obnoxious, you know, but with everybody sharing ideas and doing their own thing, running for office, supporting Ron Paul, supporting the Libertarian Party, whatever that may be, then, when freedom ultimately is restored in this country, it will be the results of human action, not of human design, to coin the words of Friedrich Hayek. So it's not a result of a central plan, it's the consequence of everybody in this room doing what he thinks is best to advance liberty because he, himself, knows what he's best capable of doing. Thank you.

Audience member: Good morning, Jacob. Jean Carbonneau of Portland, Maine. One thing I'm going to do when I get home, I'm going to take from the packet and sign up my nieces and nephews to get *Freedom Daily*. They're 16 years old and 18 years old. I think that's one way, especially with young people with the Ron Paul revolution, planting the seeds, getting them interested and motivated. Not a question but just a comment. I've listened to Ernie Hancock's radio show, and awhile ago he interviewed Milt Bearden, who worked for the CIA for 30 years, and their most effective means of communicating your message they used wasn't through torture or coup or whatever in eastern Europe. They would print up leaflets of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, print it in their language, and distribute it in the Eastern Bloc. That's what he stated. That was the most effective means of toppling or getting people to think on these ideas. I thought I'd just mention that.

Jacob Hornberger: That's fantastic. Again, it goes to the dissemination of ideas. He mentions *Freedom Daily*. That's our journal, many of you know it, but that's a great way to share ideas with people. Give them gift subscriptions to our journal, to the other foundations, the Foundation for Economic Education, the Cato Institute, *Reason*, Mises Institute, put them on websites like LewRockwell.com, I mean, Antiwar.com, on and on, and then that way it's not so obtrusive. When I visited Cuba, by the way, they had reformers there I visited in their homes that had on their shelves books by Ludwig von Mises, Friedrich Hayek, Milton Friedman. And that's how they were sharing ideas, free market ideas in Cuba, very carefully but couched in the terms of the revolution and all but understanding that's the way it happens, through the dissemination of ideas. It's not enough to come to this conference and remain mute when you return home. You got to share what you've gotten with others. Yes, sir?

Audience member: Thank you. And I think that this is a great start also to a rational debate and discourse. I'm hearing a lot of speakers say that we don't have that. I actually have an idea for a package of five new constitutional amendments, but one of them, I think, particularly, pertains to what you were saying. After the Vietnam War, we had a War Powers Act, which of course was ignored by King George and King Richard. However, that War Powers Act could be codified into an amendment and expanded into what I call a covert War Powers Act, which would actually require that covert operations, some of which you allude to, actually, the policy and the spending would have to be public, and even the overall operation would have to be public. Only the details of operations could be clandestine, but you still would have to have representatives that would see those or be privy to those with the right levels of classification. So, anyway, I wonder about your thoughts on a covert War Powers Act.

Jacob Hornberger: Well, I think the idea is good. I mean, I really think that people ought to put pressure on Congressmen to impeach any President that goes to war without the constitutionally required congressional declaration of war. I mean, that's the law. <Applause> It's the law. It's the law that we, the people, have imposed on government officials. That's what the Constitution is. It's our law. We have to obey their laws that they pass. They should have to obey our laws. I would say that, but on the other thing, I believe in, when you got to weed, I learned this, I grew up on a farm: you can't get rid of that weed by cutting the branches off of it, you know, or trimming it down. The only way to get rid of a weed is to pull it out. Instead of worrying about how to control the covert operations of the CIA, abolish the CIA. <Applause>

Audience member: I read two things before I came to this conference that were very revealing to me. The first thing that I read was the Constitution of the United States, just to kind of review it before I came down here, very readable document, I think everyone will agree. And the thing that I discovered about the Constitution is that the power of this government is in Congress. It's in the House of Representatives and it's in the Senate. It's not in the Court and it's not in the White House, okay? That's

the first thing I discovered. The second thing I discovered, the second thing that I read before I came down here was the fact that Congress has an approval rating of about 11 percent, okay? Eleven percent. Now, my question-- exactly, well deserved. Now, my question to you is, I think we do need a plan. I think this is a golden opportunity to attain 10, 20, 30, 40 seats in Congress and become a legitimate third party movement in this nation, okay? You got to climb the tree from the bottom, not from the top, and this whole thing of going for the White House time after time after time and tilting against windmills seems to me totally ridiculous. We should be putting together a plan, an organization, to go through some of those low-lying apples in Congress and be able to establish ourselves as a legitimate third party force. I just wanted to, you know, to get your thoughts on the potential of that kind of a movement taking place.

Jacob Hornberger: I think it'd be fantastic, and when I said there's no central plan, that doesn't mean there can't be individual plans. I mean, certainly, everybody plans-- and they work together to coordinate those plans. But clearly, if we had 535 Ron Pauls in the Senate and the House, I mean...
<Applause>

Audience member: That's the way it's got to be done.

Jacob Hornberger: Yeah. I totally agree with you. Now, I don't-- I think you'd agree it doesn't really matter whether the people who would be abolishing or repealing all these laws like the drug war and stuff are Democrats, Republicans, or Libertarian Party members or Green Party members. As long as they reflect this philosophy, I think that's what matters. I mean, Ron Paul's a Republican. I mean...

Audience member: Don't you think the Democrats and Republicans are hopelessly polluted and corrupted by the military industrial complex, the new security industrial complex, Wall Street, the pharmaceutical industry? It's almost hopeless that we can bring them back into any kind of sense.

Jacob Hornberger: I, I...

Audience member: We need a new group of people to come in.

Jacob Hornberger: I agree with you, but Ron Paul shows you that it's not impossible, you see.
<Applause> I mean, I'm looking for the day when there's the Democratic Ron Paul, you know, that comes in on the Left. But, yes, I totally agree with you. More people running for Congress that reflect this philosophy would be fantastic.

Audience member: Thank you.

Jacob Hornberger: Walter?

Audience member: Okay. What could we do, since I got in line here, most of what I would suggest has already been spoken of, but I'll expand slightly. Last year, when I was here at this conference, I took some time and visited some friends that live in Chevy Chase, Maryland. Well, it turns out that they happen to live on the same street as Chief Justice Roberts. I obtained his home mailing address and now he is receiving *Freedom Daily*. <laughter> <Applause>

Jacob Hornberger: We'll see if he cites it in one of his opinions.

Audience member: We hope so. We're from several of the states, I don't know how many states are represented; however, I'm from Charleston, and if you're from Charleston, you don't have to tell what state you're from. You're automatically from South Carolina. My first district Congressman receives *Freedom Daily*. I need to check with staff and make sure that it doesn't need to be renewed. My U.S. Senators, comrade Graham and Jim DeMint, receive *Freedom Daily*. So I'm kind of waging a low-key, peaceful guerrilla war sending that out to folks and I send it to most of my friends who are literate. When I left here last year, I decided I wanted to go to some of the War Between the States battlefields. First place I went to was Fredericksburg, and I walked into the visitors' center and, lo and behold, there's a friend of mine I hadn't seen in almost 20 years. He was retired and he was working there, so, you know, I ended up spending a couple of days with him and his wife.

One of the ways I thanked him was to send him *Freedom Daily*. Well, I stopped by his house on the way up here, and one of the first things he said to me was, "Hey, thank you for sending that to me." He is a, I'd say, a weak neocon, and he's heading in our direction. So take and send subscriptions to *Freedom Daily* to your member of Congress, your Senators, write letters to the editor, bombard politicians with letters. That's some of the things that you all can do.

Jacob Hornberger: Thank you, Walter. <Applause> I should also say Walter sent us a contribution of lots of boxes of *1984* by Orwell with a request that we send all the new members of Congress a copy, which we did. <laughter> <Applause> Last question.

Audience member: I'll try to make it simple and not be a statement. Bumper, I love your comments in the preparation. I thought it was beautiful. The question is real simple. I may not be as peaceful as some of you and I've been in a fistfight or two in my life. I'm just curious how you respond to a fistfight.

Jacob Hornberger: <laughter> Well, that's an interesting question. I think that-- I guess the best way I can answer is, when I was in high school, I was a green belt in karate and my karate instructor said, "The best thing you can ever do when you come under attack is run." <laughter> And I think, in response to a fist fight, I think my first option would be to run, and if I were cornered, I guess I'd fight. Well, I think-- I don't know if there was a point behind that question, but I think what we want to make sure of, to try to extend the point out, is that we don't have our government starting the fights. Now, there's nothing wrong with defending ourselves from a fight when we're invaded, attacked, and so forth, but certainly our government shouldn't be involved in starting the fights.

Audience member: Can I sneak one more question in? What do you think of playwrights getting the ideas out through plays? Libertarian playwrights. All of you, start writing plays. I'm a theater critic, and the Washington-area theaters, it's competing with New York City now, the single movement, the independent theaters that are springing up, and these playwrights-- and my beat is the Hispanic beat and I have been fascinated by the Argentine playwrights, the Cuban playwrights. Have you ever heard of Griselda Gambaro, who wrote *Las Paredes (The Walls)*, about the *desaparecidos*, the disappeared ones? And look what-- I mean, the theater leads political movements. That's the history of Argentina. Anarchism started in Argentina and peaked out about 1930 and then there was a reaction, but that's where the ideas are allowed to be played out in a repressive government. And my question is, why do present Argentine playwrights seem obsessed with political ideas, more so than American playwrights? Because they're so repressed?

Jacob Hornberger: I totally agree with you. We got to wrap up, though.

Audience member: Okay.

Jacob Hornberger: Stay on schedule. But it goes along with what I was saying earlier.

Audience member: Start writing plays.

Jacob Hornberger: Let these flowers bloom in every sector, in every sector, literature, politics, everywhere.